

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

Novel vaccines for use against β -hemolytic *Streptococcus* colonization or infection are disclosed. The vaccines contain an immunogenic amount of a variant of streptococcal C5a peptidase (SCP). Also disclosed is a method of 5 protecting a susceptible mammal against β -hemolytic *Streptococcus* colonization or infection by administering such a vaccine. Enzymatically inactive SCP, and polynucleotides encoding these SCP proteins are further disclosed.

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